

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAN JO 03335 182114Z

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ACTION ARA-20

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USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-13 SEC-03 JUSE-00 SCA-01 FBIE-00

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TAGS: PGOV, EFIN, CS

SUBJECT: LA NACION EDITORIAL ATTACKS VESCO

REF: SAN JOSE 3324

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ON SEPT. 18 LA NACION PUBLISHED A STINGING EDITORIAL CRITICAL OF MANY ELEMENTS IN ROBERT VESCO'S INTERVIEW WHICH THE PAPER PUBLISHED RECENTLY (REFTEL). THE PAPER RIPPED APART MANY OF VESCO'S COMMENTS AND WENT NOTICEABLY FURTHER THAN IT HAD IN EARLIER ATTACKS IN SUGGESTING VESCO HAS INVESTED IN POLITICS. END SUMMARY.

2. LA NACION'S PROMISED REJOINDER TO THE FOUR-PART INTERVIEW PUBLISHED LAST WEEK AND OVER THE WEEKEND CAME ON SEPTEMBER 18 IN A FULL-PAGE EDITORIAL ENTITLED, "ROBERT VESCO'S NEW IMAGE." THE EDITORIALIST CLEARLY HAD DONE HIS HOMEWORK AS HE REACHED BACK AND CAREFULLY NOTED THE DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN ROBERT VESCO'S VERSION AS GIVEN TO LA NACION REPORTER AND THE RECORD. THE MAIN POINTS IN THE EDITORIAL ARE AS FOLLOWS:

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PAGE 02 SAN JO 03335 182114Z

3. LA NACION BEGAN BY IDENTIFYING VESCO'S PRESS

INTERVIEWS, COURTESY CALLS, AND NEWFOUND VISIBILITY FOR WHAT IT IS--AN OBVIOUS AND CONTRIVED EFFORT TO IMPROVE HIS IMAGE BEFORE THE COSTA RICAN POLITICAL CAMPAIGN OPENS IN EARNEST. LA NACION NOTES IN THE FIRST PLACE THAT VESCO CAME TO COSTA RICA BECAUSE THE PRESIDENT (FIGUERES) "DESPERATELY NEEDED" FINANCING FOR HIS PRIVATE COMPANIES AND HE (VESCO) NEEDED A PERSONAL AND FINANCIAL REFUGE. VESCO'S OFT-USED ARGUMENT THAT THE SEC IS PERSECUTING HIM BECAUSE HE SOUGHT TO INVEST CAPITAL IN UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES IS CHARACTERIZED BY LA NACION AS AN INSULT TO THE INTELLIGENCE OF COSTA RICANS. LIKEWISE VESCO'S AFFIRMATION THAT HE HAD ASKED FOR NOTHING IN COSTA RICA IS CONTRADICTED BY THE FACTS, POINTS OUT THE EDITORIAL, THAT HE HAS OBTAINED A COSTA RICAN PASSPORT, AND SOUGHT TO ESTABLISH AN "INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL DISTRICT" HERE.

4. THE VESCO ALLEGATION THAT THE SEC'S CHARGES AGAINST HIM DO NOT INVOLVE FRAUD WAS DEFLATED BY THE NEWSPAPER WHICH POINTED OUT THIS WAS NOT A CHARGE INVENTED BY THE PRESS. LA NACION SPECIFIED THAT THE CHARGE AGAINST VESCO CLEARLY IS FRAUD. MOREOVER, THE CLAIM THAT VESCO IS UNWILLING TO APPEAR IN COURT TO ANSWER THE CHARGES BECAUSE IF HE DOES IT COULD DAMAGE PRESIDENT NIXON'S IMAGE, LA NACION CHARGES IS A CHILDISH ARGUMENT FOR INNOCENCE.

5. THE LA NACION EDITORIAL REPEATED ITS EARLIER STATED POSITION ON THE UNDESIRABILITY OF VESCO INVESTMENTS IN COSTA RICA; THAT THEY DERIVE FROM QUESTIONABLE SOURCES AND ARE IN LITIGATION, THAT THE INTERNATIONAL IMAGE OF COSTA RICA HAS BEEN DAMAGED BY THEIR PRESENCE, AND THAT THEY ARE TOO LARGE GIVEN THE FOREGOING TO BE ABSORBED IN A HEALTHY MANNER BY THIS SMALL COUNTRY.

6. THE EDITORIAL STATES THAT VESCO'S CONNECTIONS WITH HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, HIS INTEREST IN INVESTING IN THE COSTA RICAN MEDIA, AND THE POLITICAL PARTIES INTEREST IN VESCO'S HELP IN FINANCING THEIR POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS ARE ALL INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE HEALTHY PLAY OF DEMOCRATIC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 SAN JO 03335 182114Z

FORCES.

7. LA NACION ALSO SUGGESTS THAT BEFORE VESCO'S PRESENCE WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE IN COSTA RICA HE MUST, (1) APPEAR BEFORE THOSE COURTS WHERE HE IS CHARGED; (2) DISCONNECT HIMSELF FROM COSTA RICAN POLITICIANS; (3) RETURN THE (GOVERNMENT) BONDS WHICH HE HAS INVESTED IN; AND (4) RETURN HIS COSTA RICAN PASSPORT.

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